Curriculum Handbook *for* **Parents**

2004–2005

GRADE 8 EIGHT

Alberta
LEARNING

Alberta Learning

This document, along with most Alberta Learning documents, can be found on the Web site at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca.

Parent documents referenced in this handbook, along with most Alberta Learning documents, are available for purchase from:

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Toll free: 310–0000 (inside Alberta)
Fax: 780–422–9750
Internet: http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

Telephone numbers of branches referred to in this handbook can be reached, toll free inside Alberta, by dialing 310–0000.

Aboriginal Services Branch
Telephone: 780–415–9300
Fax: 780–415–9306
E-mail: asb@gov.ab.ca

Curriculum Branch
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–3745
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French Language Services Branch
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ISSN 1483–1627

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Curriculum Handbook *for* **Parents**

2004–2005

GRADE **8**

This Curriculum Handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 8 curriculum. It includes:

- selected learning outcomes for each subject area from the provincial curriculum
- links to the Alberta Learning Web site where more information can be found
- information on personal and career development and planning for senior high school
- a feedback form.

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104-07555/

Message from the Minister of Learning

Parents play a central role in the education of their children. Your involvement and encouragement nurtures an enjoyment of learning and helps your child excel. In order to assist you in this role, Alberta Learning has published the *Curriculum Handbook for Parents*. This series of handbooks outlines what your child learns in school and the goals that have been set for students.

Alberta has one of the best education systems in the world, due in large part to our high quality curriculum. Alberta's basic education system is designed to help students achieve their individual potential and create a positive future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Thanks in part to the high standards of Alberta's curriculum, Alberta students are achieving at or near the top of national and international assessments. Albertans share a commitment for excellence in education as we all have a stake in making sure Alberta's learning system meets the needs of today's students and future generations. Together we can ensure Alberta students have the foundation they need for a lifetime of success.

For more information about your child's classroom learning, or if you have questions about this handbook, I encourage you to talk with your child's teacher.

Dr. Lyle Oberg
Minister of Learning

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Information for Parents

Introduction

Web site links for further information are provided throughout the handbook.

Students learn in a variety of environments—in their homes, schools and communities. Parents, teachers and community members form a partnership to assist this learning.

When parents know what children are studying at school, they can provide better home support for their children's learning. The *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents* have been designed to assist parents in participating in their child's education by fostering an understanding of what students learn at each grade level.

Learning in Alberta

Schools provide students with a broad educational program that helps them:

- develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in a variety of subject areas
- demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills in problem solving and decision making
- demonstrate competence in using information technologies
- know how to learn and work independently and as part of a team
- develop desirable personal characteristics and the ability to make ethical decisions
- demonstrate initiative, leadership, flexibility and persistence
- have the desire and realize the need for lifelong learning.

Schools also prepare students to make positive contributions to society through communities, the workplace and/or post-secondary studies.

Teachers make a number of decisions when planning for classroom instruction. Within any group of students, there is a range of individual differences. Teachers use the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum to meet the needs and interests of their students and to make connections across subject areas. They choose resources, equipment and materials to help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teaching methods and schedules vary from school to school and from class to class to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

Alberta Learning assists teachers by reviewing and selecting the best possible resources, such as textbooks, videotapes and computer software, for all subject areas. Authorization of resources by Alberta Learning indicates that the resources meet high standards and can help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teachers can choose other resources, as long as they follow school board policy.

http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

Authorized resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

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Helping Your Child at Home

Here are some important pointers for you to help your child learn.

- Be positive and encouraging in your approach to learning. It will help your child feel confident and enthusiastic about success.
- Talk to your child about schoolwork, and help with homework when you can.
- Help your child set realistic goals, and discuss progress in an encouraging way.
- Connect your child's schoolwork with everyday life, and use these opportunities for problem solving in everyday situations.
- Keep in touch with teachers about your child's progress, including successes and achievements, not just concerns.

The following resources may help you. Check your child's school for availability.

These resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

- *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to Be More Successful Learners*—Information on knowing yourself, getting organized, making every class count, test taking, presenting learning, getting along with others and staying motivated.
- *The Parent Advantage: Helping Children Become More Successful Learners at Home and School, Grades 1–9*—Strategies parents can use to help their child improve organizational, reading, writing, spelling, mathematical, test taking and project skills at the grades 1–9 levels.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/parents/mathprbk.pdf

- *Working Together in Mathematics Education*—Ways parents can support student learning in mathematics.

http://www.learnalberta.ca

- *LearnAlberta.ca* Web site—Online multimedia learning resources that directly relate to the Alberta programs of study.

http://www.2learn.ca/

- *TELUS 2Learn* Web site—An education–business partnership that provides Internet inservice, support and information for Alberta teachers, students and parents.

School Councils

Schools, parents and communities all play an important role in education. School councils are designed to give parents, students, teachers and other community members meaningful involvement in decisions about policies, programs and services and the allocation of funds. Each school council determines its own level of involvement, depending on local needs. Parents can get more information on how to get involved by contacting their local school or the Alberta Home and School Councils' Association (AHSCA).

http://www.ahsca.ab.ca

School Fees and Fundraising

Decisions regarding school fees and fundraising are made by the local board or by the school principal in consultation with the school council within policy guidelines established by the school board. In September 2000, the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) developed and provided guidelines to school boards to assist boards in establishing appropriate local policy.

http://www.asba.ab.ca/services_for_boards/policy_advisories_fund.html

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School Fees

http://www.asba.ab.ca/services_for_boards/policy_advisories_fees.html

A primary objective is to ensure that fees are not being charged for core items. Fees may be charged for supplies and materials provided for the student's personal use or consumption; this may include such things as calculators, locker rentals, student planners and computer diskettes. The fees charged are on a cost recovery basis.

Local policies may include a provision to waive fees or extend payment allowances where parents are experiencing financial difficulties.

Fundraising

The guidelines state fundraising should not be done for core items such as textbooks. Some fundraising is appropriate for things like athletic uniforms, field trips, and other extras that staff and parents want for their schools. Participation in fundraising activities should be voluntary. No student should be excluded from an event or program because the parents did not contribute.

School Choice

Choice is one of the important principles Alberta's education system is built on. When it comes to selecting a school, parents and students can choose from a wide range of options. They can select from public schools, Catholic schools, Francophone schools, private schools, and charter schools. They can also access a number of unique and innovative programs—including online schools. Parents can also opt to home school their children.

Information about Curriculum

Alberta has one of the best education systems in the world. One of the many reasons is a centralized, high quality curriculum that outlines what students are expected to learn and be able to do, in all subjects and grades. Alberta's curriculum is designed to help students achieve their individual potential and create a positive future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Accessing Information

Parents can access information about the curriculum and learning resources in a number of ways:

- Contact teachers or school administrators.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/parent.asp

- **Curriculum Handbooks** contain selected outcomes for each subject area from the Alberta programs of study. They provide a more detailed picture of each year. This Curriculum Handbook is one of a set from Kindergarten to senior high school produced in general and Catholic versions, and in French. They are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/parent.asp

- **Curriculum Summaries** for each grade level provide a brief overview of each year. The summaries are available on the Alberta Learning Web site.

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http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/

- In Alberta, the provincial curriculum is organized into **Programs of Study**. They contain learning outcomes for each subject area from Kindergarten to Grade 12. They are legal documents that outline why the educational program is offered, what students are expected to learn and the basic principles about how students are to achieve the required knowledge, skills and attitudes. School authorities use the *Programs of Study* to ensure that students meet provincial standards of achievement. However, they have flexibility to decide how to teach the curriculum and the order in which it is taught. They are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/lrdb

- The Authorized Resources Database on the Alberta Learning Web site lists **Alberta authorized student and teacher resources**, most of which are available for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca

- The **Alberta Learning Web site** contains information on learning from the early years to adulthood.

Curriculum Content—Deciding What Students Should Learn

The Alberta curriculum strives to:

- reflect the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that Alberta students need to be well prepared for future learning and the world of work
- anticipate and plan for the needs of the future by considering the changes and developments in society such as trends in employment, globalization and advances in technology
- incorporate values of good citizenship and respect for different languages and cultures
- consider students' needs and abilities—intellectual, social, emotional and physical—at different ages and stages of growth
- ensure that each grade provides a foundation of knowledge for successful learning in subsequent years
- incorporate new discoveries and theories that are generally accepted by experts in subject areas
- develop skills that are necessary for success in learning a subject
- consider new research on proven teaching methods and how students learn best
- reflect the most appropriate level at which the skills are to be acquired
- integrate how the study of a subject contributes to student personal growth and development
- accommodate learning in different environments
- consider various ways of delivering a program to students, including new technologies and use of community resources such as distance learning and workplace learning.

Curriculum Development—Who Is Involved in the Process?

Alberta Learning takes a lead role in developing and revising provincial curriculum. However, many others, including teachers, principals, parents, education experts, post-secondary institutions, elders and community members, play a vital role in the process. Input from various stakeholders ensures that curriculum continually meets the needs of students and that there are smooth transitions from grade to grade and to post-secondary education and the world of work.

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Ensuring Curriculum Is Current

Curriculum must provide students with the knowledge and skills needed for the present and future. It is reviewed regularly and changes are made to keep it current and relevant. Curriculum revisions occur only after extensive consultations with education stakeholders.

Alberta Learning plans any curriculum changes well in advance to minimize any impact on schools, teachers and students. This ensures that school authorities have sufficient time to prepare for the changes and purchase any needed resources.

Revising Curriculum

If it is determined through the regular review process that there is a need to make minor or major revisions to a subject area in the curriculum, education stakeholders play a major role in the process. Alberta Learning conducts initial consultations and prepares a draft *Program of Studies* for that subject area. The draft is shared with a wide variety of education stakeholders through advisory committees, online feedback forms, conferences and presentations to teacher specialist councils. Teachers play a vital role in the process. They use their practical knowledge about a subject and about students' needs at specific age levels to provide input and feedback during the process.

Implementing Curriculum

The draft *Program of Studies*, developed in consultation with education stakeholders, is referred to the Minister of Learning for approval. Schools may have the opportunity to pilot the program for one year prior to full provincial implementation. This transition year gives schools time to prepare for the new curriculum. When a curriculum is implemented province-wide, all schools must teach the new curriculum. Alberta Learning, in partnership with superintendents, boards, teachers, principals, parents and students, shares roles and responsibilities in the effective implementation of a new curriculum.

Alberta Learning supports school authorities by producing teacher resources that provide ideas for lesson planning, instructional strategies and student assessment. Also, it provides orientation for school authority leaders and lead teachers about curriculum changes and shares updates at professional conferences and in-services.

Professional development funds are provided to six Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia. Each Regional Consortia organizes and provides activities to respond to in-service needs identified locally. This may include information and orientation sessions related to curriculum revisions.

Alberta Learning also provides funding to help schools purchase learning and teaching resources through the Learning Resources Centre. These resources are designed specifically to support the provincial curriculum.

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Aboriginal Education

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/aborigin/default.asp

Aboriginal peoples throughout the province have indicated that they want their children to complete regular school requirements and achieve the same standards as set for all students in Alberta.

The term "Aboriginal" refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit. To support the learning of Aboriginal students, schools are encouraged to use learning resources that promote Aboriginal perspectives. All students in Alberta should understand and be aware of Aboriginal history, culture, lifestyles and heritage. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) initiative works to infuse Aboriginal perspectives into the existing Kindergarten to Grade 12 programs of study. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education Policy Framework (2002) provides further information on this initiative. Student and teacher resources have been developed by Alberta Learning to support teaching and learning.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/nativeed/nativepolicy

Both provincially and locally authorized Blackfoot and Cree language and culture courses are offered in the province.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/teacherresourcescat.pdf

A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs provides information to assist Aboriginal parents in working with schools to meet the special needs of their children. This resource is available for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

Our Treasured Children is a videotape that complements *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs*. It highlights intergenerational stories from members of the Aboriginal community. The videotape is available for purchase from the LRC.

Supports for Learning

Students have individual learning needs. Schools, supported by Alberta Learning, provide a variety of programs and services to meet the individual needs of students.

English as a Second Language

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/ESL/default.asp

Many children born in Canada have a first language other than English, and many students move here from non-English speaking countries. Schools provide additional assistance for English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Grade 1 to Grade 12. This helps them acquire sufficient fluency in English so they can function in the regular classroom as quickly as possible.

Special Needs

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/

The *School Act* specifies that school boards are responsible for determining if a student is in need of a special education program. Students with special needs, including those with mild, moderate and severe disabilities, and those who are gifted and talented, require specialized learning opportunities in order to receive an education that is consistent with their identified learning needs. School boards must provide special education programming for all school-age children with special education needs.

Students with special education needs may require changes to: instruction, assessment strategies, materials and resources, classroom environment, equipment and/or the regular curriculum. In addition, some students may require referral to specialized health-care services.

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For more information on a Review by the Minister, contact the Disputes Management Team Leader at 780–427–7235 or see Policy 3.5.1–Review by the Minister http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/pol-plan/polregs/351.asp.

Most students with special needs are placed in regular classrooms in their neighbourhood or local schools, and are provided with programming, supports and services to meet their individual needs throughout the school day. There are a range of placement options possible; different students need different kinds of support. Deciding on the educational placement for an individual student is a collaborative process, and in most instances, parents and school staff agree on appropriate placements. If there is a disagreement, parents can appeal a decision at the district level. The school principal can provide information on the appeal procedure in your district. If parents do not agree with the decision of an appeal to the school board, they may write to the Minister of Learning and ask for a review of the board decision.

All students with identified special needs require an individualized program plan (IPP). An IPP is a plan of action with measurable goals. It identifies your child's specific strengths, needs and current level of performance. The IPP also explains what your child will be learning and how he or she will be learning. The IPP is a flexible tool that is updated regularly. Parents, school staff and the student need to work together as a learning team to ensure that the IPP is implemented.

If you feel your child is having difficulty learning, you should talk to the classroom teacher to share knowledge about your child that could assist in determining the cause of these difficulties and in deciding if there are any teaching and learning strategies that can be made to improve your child's learning. School-based staff can use a number of informal ways to identify learning needs. If it is apparent that school-based strategies are not enough, the teacher, in consultation with parents, will make a referral for specialized assessment. Your child's teacher or the school principal will have information on the assessment procedures for your area.

The following resources provide additional information.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/ParentResources.asp

- *The Learning Team: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2003)—Information for parents of children with special needs

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/

- *Standards for Special Education* (Amended June 2004)—Information on the requirements for school boards regarding delivery of education programs and services to students with special needs in grades 1–12

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp

- *The Journey: A Handbook for Parents of Children Who Are Gifted and Talented* (2004)—Information and strategies for nurturing your child's learning and emotional well-being at home, in school and in the community.

The *Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* and *Our Treasured Children* videotape are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca/.

- *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2000)—Information for Aboriginal parents about rights and responsibilities regarding the education of their children with special needs
- *Our Treasured Children* is a videotape that complements *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs*. It highlights intergenerational stories from members of the Aboriginal community. The videotape is available for purchase from the LRC.

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Distance and Online Learning

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/

The Learning Technologies Branch (LTB) develops course materials and learning objects for distance and online learning.

http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

For information about purchasing distance learning print and CD materials, contact the Learning Resources Centre.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/400/crslist.html

For a listing of all print distance learning courses available for purchase or study, visit the LTB Print Resources Web page.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/400/crslist.html

To see the electronic products available, visit the Electronic Resources Web page.

http://www.learnalberta.ca

LearnAlberta.ca provides exciting new online educational content to students, parents and teachers. Check out multimedia material, such as Math Continuum, National Geographic Science Centre units, French and Ukrainian language resources and English Language Arts Alive! Access the Online Reference Centre for a wide variety of research tools, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries and other reference works for all grade levels.

For information about registering in a distance learning course, contact a distance learning school, an online school, or your local school jurisdiction.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/M_12/default.asp

The French Language Services Branch develops distance learning courses for French language instruction. For courses available in French, contact the French Language Services Branch.

Integrated Occupational Program (IOP)

The Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) is a program of choice that begins in Grade 8 and continues through Grade 12. Students may enter the program at any time during grades 8 through 12. Students who successfully complete the IOP earn a Certificate of Achievement.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/iop/default.asp

The Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) is a distinctive program for students who learn best through hands-on experiential learning activities, and when the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes is relevant to their personal experiences. Student learning is further enhanced when meaningful connections to the community are made that result in successful transitions from the school to the workplace and responsible citizenship. Community partnerships are integral to all IOP courses and include on- or off-site community/workplace involvement.

IOP consists of academic and occupational components. Students will also take physical education, health and life skills/CALM and complementary courses.

Academic subjects:

- IOP English Language Arts 8, 9, 16, 26, 36
- IOP Mathematics 8, 9, 16, 26
- IOP Science 8, 9, 16, 26
- IOP Social Studies 8, 9, 16, 26

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Occupational Component

- Practical Arts 8, 9
- Occupations 16, 26, 36

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/iop/IOPmanual.pdf

For more information, refer to the *Integrated Occupational Program Information Manual for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers*, 1994. The manual is available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

Assessment

Assessing Student Achievement

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/default.asp

In the classroom, a teacher uses a variety of means to assess students' learning throughout the school year. These assessments are based on the instruction being provided, in order to inform the teacher's planning from day to day. Classroom assessment may serve a diagnostic purpose, indicating students' strengths and weaknesses in specific skill areas. At other times it may be formative, indicating how well students have achieved in a unit of study or how well they have achieved to a particular point in the course. At the end of a school year, a teacher also assesses how well the students have achieved the expected learning outcomes in the curriculum for that grade. This summative type of assessment is designed primarily for reporting purposes. All these classroom assessments are integral to instruction.

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Grade 8

Overview of Grade 8

In Grade 8, students study required subject areas. They also choose optional courses that give them the chance to explore areas of interest and career possibilities. Students have access to 950 hours of instruction during a school year.

The Grade 9 Alberta program of studies for each subject area sets out general outcomes or topics that provide an overview of the important learnings students accomplish. Specific outcomes are included for each general outcome or topic and state in detail the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are working towards achieving.

This handbook contains:

- the general outcomes or topics for each subject area
- selected specific outcomes for most subject areas.

The programs of study, which include all the general and specific outcomes, are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or from the LRC.

Required Subject Areas. ***Students take:***					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Optional Courses. ***Students may select from:***					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English*	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

* Students in French immersion programs and bilingual programs in other languages take English language arts as well as language arts in the target language.

Students in immersion and bilingual programs also take a number of subjects in the target language.

Information on the Language Initiative, which will be implemented province-wide in the 2006–2007 school year, beginning in Grade 4, is available at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/languages/overview.asp.

New programs for the 2004–2005 school year:

- Italian Language and Culture (7–12 course sequence)

Programs under development:

- Chinese Language Arts
- Chinese Language and Culture (7–12 course sequence)
- Cree Language and Culture (K–12 course sequence)
- Cree Language and Culture (7–12 course sequence)
- Career and Technology Studies (CTS)
  - Management and Marketing (E-commerce)
- French as a Second Language (FSL) (4–12 course sequence)
- German Language Arts
- Japanese Language and Culture (7–12 course sequence)
- Integrated Occupational Program (IOP)
- Social Studies
- Ukrainian Language and Culture (7–12 course sequence)

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Required Subject Areas

The required subject areas are the foundation of the junior high school program.

Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

English Language Arts

View the English language arts subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/english/

There are two basic aims of English language arts. One aim is to encourage, in students, an understanding and appreciation of the significance and artistry of literature. A second aim is to enable each student to understand and appreciate language and to use it confidently and competently for a variety of purposes, with a variety of audiences and in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and learning.

From Kindergarten to Grade 12, students are developing knowledge, skills and attitudes in six language arts: Listening and Speaking; Reading and Writing; Viewing and Representing. Students learn to compose, comprehend and respond to oral, print and other media texts. They experience a variety of texts from many cultural traditions.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 8 English Language Arts Program of Studies.

Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences

- seek out and consider diverse ideas, opinions and experiences to develop and extend own ideas, opinions and experiences
- examine and reflect on own growth in effective use of language to revise and extend personal goals
- acknowledge the value of the ideas and opinions of others in exploring and extending personal interpretations and perspectives
- exchange ideas and opinions to clarify understanding and to broaden personal perspectives

Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts

- use knowledge of authors, forms and genres, developed during previous reading, to direct and extend reading experiences
- take notes, make outlines and use such strategies as read, recite, review to comprehend and remember ideas and information
- choose and use strategies for word identification, vocabulary development and spelling that either build on specific strengths or address areas for improvement
- discuss various ways characters are developed and the reasons for and plausibility of character change
- compare and contrast the different perspectives provided by first and third person narration
- choose forms or genres of oral, print or other media texts for the particular affects they will have on audiences and purposes

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Manage ideas and information	• identify and trace the development of arguments, opinions or points of view in oral, print and other media texts • select the most appropriate information sources for topic, audience, purpose and form • record key ideas and information from oral, print and other media texts, avoiding overuse of direct quotations • make notes in point form, summarizing major ideas and supporting details; reference sources • communicate ideas and information in a variety of oral, print and other media texts, such as interviews, minilessons and documentaries • assess the research process, and consider alternative ways of achieving research goals
Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication	• revise by adding words and phrases that emphasize important ideas or create dominant impressions • vary handwriting style and pace, depending on the context, audience and purpose • choose an effective format for documents, depending on the content, audience and purpose • use verb tenses consistently throughout a piece of writing • use knowledge of spelling generalizations and how words are formed to spell technical terms and unfamiliar words in own writing • plan and facilitate small group and short, whole class presentations to share information • present information to achieve a particular purpose and to appeal to interest and background knowledge of reader or audience • anticipate the organizational pattern of presentations, and identify important ideas and supporting details
Respect, support and collaborate with others	• compare ways in which oral, print and other media texts reflect specific elements of cultures or periods in history • use inclusive language and actions that demonstrate respect for people of different races, cultures, genders, ages and abilities • use opportunities as a group member to contribute to group goals and extend own learning • organize and complete tasks cooperatively by defining roles and responsibilities, negotiating to find the basis for agreement, setting objectives and time frames, and reviewing progress • evaluate the quality of own contributions to group process, and offer constructive feedback to others; propose suggestions for improvement

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Mathematics

View the mathematics subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/math/

The aim of the mathematics program is to prepare students to:

- use mathematics confidently to solve problems
- communicate and reason mathematically
- appreciate and value mathematics
- commit themselves to lifelong learning
- become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics to contribute to society.

Students learn to use the following mathematical processes:

- communicate mathematically
- connect mathematical ideas to everyday experiences and to other subject areas
- use estimation and mental mathematics where appropriate
- apply new mathematical knowledge to problem solving
- reason and justify their thinking
- use appropriate technologies
- use visualization to assist in problem solving, processing information and making connections.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 8 Mathematics Program of Studies.

Number

- demonstrate a number sense for rational numbers, including common fractions, integers and whole numbers
- apply arithmetic operations on rational numbers to solve problems
- apply the concepts of rate, ratio, percentage and proportion to solve problems in meaningful contexts

Patterns and Relations

- use patterns, variables and expressions, together with their graphs, to solve problems
- solve and verify one-step and two-step linear equations with rational number solutions

Shape and Space

- apply indirect measurement procedures to solve problems
- generalize measurement patterns and procedures, and solve problems involving area, perimeter, surface area and volume
- link angle measures and the properties of parallel lines to the classification and properties of quadrilaterals
- create and analyze design problems and architectural patterns, using the properties of scaling, proportion and networks

Statistics and Probability

- develop and implement a plan for the collection, display and analysis of data, using technology, as required
- evaluate and use measures of central tendency and variability
- compare theoretical and experimental probability of independent events

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Science

View the science subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/science/

The secondary science program is guided by the vision that all students have the opportunity to develop scientific literacy. The goal of scientific literacy is to develop the science-related knowledge, skills and attitudes that students need to solve problems and make decisions, and at the same time help them become lifelong learners—maintaining their sense of wonder about the world around them.

The program is designed to help students understand the nature and role of science, as well as develop a solid grounding in science knowledge, skills and attitudes. Throughout the program, students learn that:

- science provides an ordered way of studying the natural world
- scientific discovery often leads to the development of new technologies and new technologies can lead to new fields of scientific investigation
- science takes place in a social context and responds to human needs. Science and technology have both intended and unintended consequences for humans and the environment.

Students study five units during their Grade 8 year. The **topics** studied and the **major outcomes** for each are:

Mix and Flow of Matter

- describe fluids used in technological devices and everyday materials
- describe the composition of fluids, and interpret the behaviour of materials in solution
- investigate and compare the properties of gases and liquids
- identify technologies based on properties of fluids

Cells and Systems

- investigate living things and their general structure, function and organization
- investigate and describe the role of cells within living things
- interpret the healthy function of human body systems, and illustrate ways the body reacts to stimuli
- describe areas of scientific investigation leading to new knowledge about body systems and to new medical applications

Light and Optical Systems

- investigate the nature of light and vision
- investigate the transmission of light, and describe its behaviour
- investigate and explain the science of image formation and vision

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Mechanical Systems

- describe and compare mechanical devices that have been improved over time
- analyze machines by describing the overall system, the subsystems and the component parts
- describe the transmission of force and energy between parts of a mechanical system
- analyze the social and environmental contexts of science and technology, as they apply to the development of mechanical devices

Freshwater and Saltwater Systems

- describe the distribution and characteristics of water in local and global environments, and identify the significance of water supply and quality to the needs of humans and other living things
- investigate and interpret linkages among landforms, water and climate
- analyze factors affecting productivity and species distribution in marine and freshwater environments
- analyze human impacts on aquatic systems

The program develops **skills** in four major areas:

Initiating and Planning
Students devise (or make) plans to investigate:
- science-inquiry questions
- practical problems
- science-related issues.

Performing and Recording
Students conduct investigations through:
- observation
- recording data
- researching information.

Analyzing and Interpreting
Students develop, analyze and assess possible explanations through:
- data display
- inference
- evaluation.

Communication and Teamwork
Students work collaboratively to:
- communicate questions, ideas, procedures and results
- evaluate individual and group processes
- defend a position or conclusion, based on their findings.

To support their learning, students are encouraged to develop positive **attitudes** in the following six areas:

- continuing interest in science
- respect for the ideas of people with various backgrounds and views
- support for scientific processes
- collaboration with others
- stewardship for the natural environment
- safety in science.

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Social Studies

View the social studies subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/social/

The aim of the social studies program is to help students gain basic knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become responsible citizens and contributing members of society. Social studies includes the study of history, geography, economics, the behavioural sciences and humanities.

Grade 8 social studies focuses on different perspectives of economic growth. The content is organized around three topics and in each topic, students are expected to address at least one issue and one question for inquiry.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 8 Social Studies Program of Studies.

Geography of Canada and the United States

- identify and define the terms regions, location and movement
- understand that people are constantly interacting with their physical environment to meet their needs
- understand that the environment is constantly being changed by human and physical forces
- understand that all places have special human and physical characteristics that distinguish them
- construct maps (including contour maps) demonstrating use of symbols, location, direction, distance, scale and physical geography
- categorize information to develop concepts—regions, location, place, movement, environmental interaction
- appreciate interdependence as a common feature of life.

Canada: History to the Twentieth Century

- understand that colonization was one result of competition between nations for new territory
- explain the process of Canada's growth and expansion
- construct a timeline of major events and contributions of individuals to shaping the political development of Canada
- read and interpret historical maps to uncover the relationships between human and physical geography on the development of the Canadian nation
- develop respect for democratic principles
- consider opinions and interpretations different from their own

South America: A Case Study of Brazil

- identify the major physical features of Brazil
- explain how immigration and settlement patterns have shaped the historical and cultural development of Brazil
- understand the effect human settlement has had on Brazil's physical environment
- understand how the culture of Brazil reflects the variety of origins of its people
- appreciate the ways different economic systems meet the needs of people

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

View the information and communication technology subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/ict/

The ICT curriculum is not intended to stand alone as a course, but rather to be infused within English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Schools have until June 2003 to phase in the program. The outcomes are organized by divisions; Division 3 is Grade 7 to Grade 9.

Students learn about the nature of technology, how to use and apply a variety of technologies, and the importance of technology to self and society.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 7 to Grade 9 Information and Communication Technology Program of Studies.

Communicating, Inquiring, Decision Making and Problem Solving

- evaluate the authority and reliability of electronic sources
- develop a process to manage volumes of information that can be made available through electronic sources
- articulate clearly a plan of action to use technology to solve a problem

Foundational Operations, Knowledge and Concepts

- explain how the need for global communication affects technology around the world
- explain the issues involved in balancing the right to access information with the right to personal privacy
- describe the impact of communication technologies on past, present and future workplaces, lifestyles and the environment
- recognize that the ability of technology to manipulate images and sound can alter the meaning of a communication

Processes for Productivity

- create multimedia presentations that take into account audiences of diverse size, age, gender, ethnicity and geographic location
- use advanced word processing menu features to accomplish a task; for example, insert a table, graph and text from another document
- design, create and modify a database for a specific purpose

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Physical Education

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/physed/

The aim of the K–12 physical education program is to enable students to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to lead an active, healthy lifestyle. Students participate in a variety of physical activities: dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in alternative environments, such as aquatics and outdoor pursuits. All learning outcomes are to be met through physical activity as a strategy for managing life challenges and fostering a desire in students to participate in lifelong physical activity.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 8 Physical Education Program of Studies.

Activity

Basic Skills
- select, combine and perform specific locomotor, nonlocomotor and manipulative skills, by using elements of body and space awareness, effort and relationships, to improve personal performance

Application of Basic Skills
- select, combine and perform activity-specific basic skills in a variety of games
- be able to identify and evaluate specific strategies and tactics that coordinate effort with others; e.g., team/fair play, in order to achieve a common activity goal

Benefits Health

Functional Fitness
- explain fitness components and principles of training, and formulate individual plans for personal physical fitness

Body Image
- discuss performance-enhancing substances and how they can affect body type in relation to physical activity

Well-being
- analyze the personal effects of exercise on the body systems before, during and after exercise

Cooperation

Communication
- discuss positive active living role models

Fair Play
- demonstrate etiquette and fair play

Leadership
- describe, apply and practise leadership and followership skills related to physical activity

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Teamwork

- identify and demonstrate positive behaviours that show respect for self and others

Do It Daily ... for Life!

Effort

- develop a personal plan that encourages participation and continued motivation

Safety

- appraise or judge movement experiences for safety that promote an active, healthy lifestyle; e.g., safe use of equipment

Goal Setting/Personal Challenge

- evaluate different ways to achieve an activity goal, and determine personal and team approaches that are challenging for both the individual and the group

Active Living in the Community

- analyze community programs that promote a physically active lifestyle

Exemptions from Physical Education

Exemptions from participation in physical education may be given for medical conditions, when accompanied by a medical certification from a doctor to the principal; for religious beliefs, when accompanied by a statement in writing from the parent to the principal; and where access to facilities is prohibitive. When exemption is granted, activities consistent with the program outcomes should be substituted, where appropriate.

Physical Education Online

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/physicaleducationonline

The Physical Education Online Web site provides a wealth of information to support student learning of the K–12 physical education program of studies. The site is organized into three major sections:

- Program of Studies—The general outcomes and grade specific outcomes for K–12.
- Teacher Resources—Links to authorized resources, the Guide to Implementation, teaching tools, and activities and lessons that address the outcomes for the K–12 physical education program.
- Home Education—This portion is designed for parents and teachers to use with 7 to 10 students who may be enrolled in an online or home education physical education course.

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Health and Life Skills

View the health and life skills subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/healthpls/

The aim of the health and life skills program is to enable students to make well-informed, healthy choices and to develop behaviours that contribute to the well-being of self and others. A comprehensive health program involves a partnership among home, school and community.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 8 Health and Life Skills Program of Studies.

Wellness Choices

Personal Health

- evaluate personal food choices, and identify strategies to maintain optimal nutrition when eating away from home; e.g., eating healthy fast foods

Safety and Responsibility

- identify potentially unsafe situations in the community, and begin to develop strategies to reduce risk; e.g., dark parking lots, lack of railway crossing lights

Relationship Choices

Understanding and Expressing Feelings

- evaluate the relationship between risk management and stress management; e.g., managing risks effectively reduces stress, managing stress can reduce impulsive behaviours

Interactions

- develop strategies for maintaining healthy relationships

Group Roles and Processes

- describe and explain the positive and negative aspects of conformity and dissent as they relate to individuals in a group or on a team

Life Learning Choices

Learning Strategies

- begin to develop goals and priorities related to learning and future career paths, based on personal interests, aptitudes and skills

Life Roles and Career Development

- update a personal portfolio to show evidence of a range of interests, assets and skills; and relate evidence to knowledge and skills required by various career paths

Volunteerism

- relate personal knowledge and skills to potential opportunities for volunteering and providing service to others in the community

Human Sexuality Education

Schools are required to offer human sexuality education in Grade 4 to Grade 9. Parents have the right to exempt their child from this instruction. Schools will provide alternative learning experiences for those students who have been exempted from human sexuality instruction.

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Optional Courses

In addition to required subject areas, junior high schools must offer a minimum of two provincially authorized optional courses. Optional courses are designed to reinforce learnings in core courses and to provide opportunities for students to explore areas of interest and career possibilities.

The range of optional courses offered varies from school to school depending on such factors as student and parent preferences, facilities and staffing.

Optional Courses. ***Students may select from:***					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

Career and Technology Studies (CTS)

View the career and technology studies subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/cts/

View the Multimedia CTS Project on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://www.learnalberta.ca/

Career and Technology Studies (CTS) is an optional program designed for Alberta's secondary school students. CTS helps junior high and senior high school students to:

- develop skills they can apply in daily living now and in the future
- investigate career options and make effective career choices
- use technology (processes, tools and techniques) effectively and efficiently
- apply and reinforce learnings developed in other subject areas
- prepare for entry into the workplace or further learning.

The CTS curriculum is organized into 22 strands. Each strand represents a group of courses designed to support broad career and occupational opportunities. Courses are the building blocks for each strand, and they define what a student is expected to know and be able to do.

The 22 Career and Technology Studies program strands are:

Agriculture
Career Transitions
Communication Technology
Community Health
Construction Technologies
Cosmetology Studies
Design Studies
Electro-Technologies
Energy and Mines
Enterprise and Innovation
Fabrication Studies
Fashion Studies
Financial Management
Foods
Forestry
Information Processing
Legal Studies
Logistics
Management and Marketing
Mechanics
Tourism Studies
Wildlife

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Optional Courses. *Students may select from:*					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

Fine and Performing Arts

View the fine arts subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/finearts/

Through the Fine and Performing Arts courses of Art, Drama and Music, students develop self-awareness and express their creativity in many ways. They will respond personally and critically to a variety of art, drama and music styles and forms.

Art

Students learn how to use traditional and contemporary tools, materials and media to express their feelings, think like artists, value the art creation and value the art form. Three areas form the framework of the junior high school art program:

- Drawings—recording, investigating, communicating, evaluating and articulating aspects of making images
- Compositions—organizations, components and relationships involved in the creation of images
- Encounters—looking at images and artifacts, finding ideas for making art, learning about the art of other times, changing imagery, and learning to understand and appreciate the purposes and effects of art

Drama

Drama encourages students to explore a variety of dramatic roles and develop a range of dramatic skills. In the junior high school drama program, students learn about drama and theatre through:

- Movement—physical, nonverbal expression
- Speech—exploration of talking and speaking to communicate ideas effectively
- Improvisation/Acting—acting out an idea or situation
- Theatre Studies—an introduction to the elements of drama and theatre
- Technical Theatre—stage construction and the use of sound, lighting, makeup, costumes, sets and props.

Music

Instrumental music, choral music and general music are the three distinctive, yet related, programs in the junior high school music curriculum. Development in any of these programs requires student involvement as a performer, listener and composer. Five main goals of the junior high school music program are to:

- develop skills in listening to, performing and reading music
- strive for musical excellence
- understand, evaluate and appreciate a variety of music styles
- develop self-expression, creativity and communication through music
- increase awareness of the history of music and the role of music in own lives.

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Optional Courses. *Students may select from:*					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

Languages Other than English

A variety of courses and programs in languages other than English are available throughout Alberta. Some of these include Aboriginal languages, French, German, Italian and Ukrainian.

Students registered in an **immersion** or a **bilingual program** follow a language arts course in the target language (e.g., French, Ukrainian) in addition to studying English language arts. In these programs, the target language is also used as the language of instruction in other subject areas, such as mathematics, science and social studies.

Aboriginal Languages

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/aborigin

Blackfoot and Cree language and culture programs are designed to enable students to learn Aboriginal languages and to increase awareness of Aboriginal cultures.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study.

- learn basic communication skills in Blackfoot or Cree
- develop cultural sensitivity, and enhance personal development
- develop a desire to extend or improve proficiency in the Blackfoot or Cree language

French Immersion Program

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/quicklinks/seclang.asp

In Alberta, many students have the opportunity to study in a French immersion program. This program, designed for non-French speaking students, offers an effective way for students to become functionally fluent in French while achieving all of the learning outcomes of the regular programs of study. Graduates from French immersion programs achieve a level of fluency in the target language that allows them to pursue their post-secondary studies in French or to accept employment in a workplace where French is the main language of communication.

There are many delivery models for French immersion present in Alberta schools:

- Early immersion—students begin their immersion experience in Kindergarten and continue in the program to Grade 12.
- Late immersion—the entry point is typically Grade 7.

Courses offered in the French language have as their basis a French version of the English program of studies, which is identical or comparable to the one used in the English program. The exception is Grade 1 to Grade 3 Social Studies. However, a program of studies specific to French immersion students was developed for the learning/teaching of French language arts. Some of the main French language arts learning outcomes are presented in the following section, French Language Arts.

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *Yes, You Can Help! Information and Inspiration for French Immersion Parents*. It is available for purchase from the LRC.

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French Language Arts

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/French/FLA/abrege/8IMM.pdf

At the junior high school level, the French language arts program of studies is intended to continue work started at the elementary level, including vocabulary and syntax enrichment, to enable students to engage more actively and effectively in proposed activities. Students become aware of elements that ensure message clarity, such as exact, precise expressions and words, and correct, increasingly complex sentences. They learn to respect the basic rules of language in the oral exchanges that take place in the classroom as well as in their writing projects.

The acquisition of a solid language basis allows students to better understand, clarify and express abstract thoughts. The program of studies also targets the development of the students' ability to plan and monitor their communication projects, whether they are working individually, with classroom partners, or participating in activities organized by the Francophone community. Students become more aware of factors that influence the way they communicate effectively in various contexts.

In **oral comprehension**, students learn to pay particular attention to the organization of a message (text structure and genre) and to their knowledge about the author, producer or broadcast to guide them in their listening. They learn to question their attitudes toward the task and the means they use to overcome difficulties.

In **reading comprehension**, students develop their reading ability by analyzing the task at hand and choosing the best way to tackle more complex passages. They improve their ability to analyze text characteristics for better understanding of internal organization (text structure and genre) and the author's intent.

In **oral production**, students learn the vocabulary and syntax that will enable them to express themselves in various contexts. They develop the ability to plan group projects and to interact effectively with their peers.

In **writing**, students gradually learn to develop a work plan that will enable them to complete their writing project more efficiently. They learn to organize and express their ideas clearly, while still respecting the rules of internal text organization and spelling. They also learn to edit their texts using various reference works.

Note: The development of basic language skills does not take place in isolated exercises, but rather in context, so that students learn not only the rules but also when and how to apply them.

In Grade 8, learning occurs primarily:

In **oral comprehension** through:

- group work situations
- listening to texts from various subject areas
- listening to newspaper and magazine articles, short stories or chapters from novels
- listening to audiotapes, such as documentaries
- viewing audiovisual materials.

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Students learn to examine the factors influencing the listening situation and become aware of their attitude toward the tasks.

In **reading comprehension**:

Teachers will select:

- descriptive texts
- information and opinion texts
- texts from the imaginary world; e.g., cartoons, poetry and song.

To develop reading strategies, students learn to tackle texts taking into account their organization (e.g., descriptive) and develop various ways of annotating texts.

In **oral production**:

The proposed situations should allow students to demonstrate what they already know, what they have learned about a given subject, or to express their opinions based on examples from their readings and discussions. The topics chosen for the presentations may be from another area of study. Students should have had the opportunity to explore topic-related vocabulary in various contexts.

The presentations and discussions should be well structured, with emphasis on:

- the use of expressions or words to describe events and their experiences
- the following sequence: *subject noun (or subject pronoun) + complement pronoun – verb*
- the present subjunctive.

Emphasis on *discussion* enables students to continue developing their ability to interact with peers. Students are required to agree on the operational rules of the group as well as on their roles and responsibilities with respect to the task.

In **writing**:

Students learn to write texts in which they pay particular attention to the structure and organization of information. They also learn to write short stories in which they establish links between the feelings of characters and their actions.

The main purpose of these learning activities is to enable students to integrate the basic elements of the written language:

- the selection of a text structure consistent with their communicative intent
- the organization of ideas according to a plan—introduction, development and conclusion
- the recognition and correction of syntactic Anglicisms
- the use of present subjunctive
- the verb agreement when the subject and verb is followed by a "screen" (words in apposition) or when the subject is *qui*
- the agreement of subject and verb in the present conditional and simple future
- the position of the direct or indirect personal pronouns in declarative and interrogatory statements in simple tenses
- punctuation
- spelling.

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French as a Second Language

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/fsl

In Alberta, French as a Second Language (FSL) is a program in which the French language is taught as a subject, often between 20 and 40 minutes a day, to help students develop communication skills in French and acquire an appreciation and understanding of Francophone cultures.

Depending upon a school board's language policy, French as a second language in junior high schools may be offered as an optional program or it may be a compulsory program. School boards may begin the program at different grade levels, since the program is based on developing language proficiency over a grade or grades without being grade specific. Many schools start the program in Grade 4, but others may not begin until Grade 7 or later.

The program is designed to teach students to:

- understand what they hear and read in French
- communicate their ideas orally and in written form, using an approach that is based on concrete and real-life experiences and situations
- acquire knowledge about local, provincial and national Francophone groups to become more aware of their presence and to understand them better
- develop French language vocabulary and grammar through thematic activities and projects that are related to real-life language experiences
- acquire specific language learning strategies that will help them become better second language learners.

Students entering junior high school may either begin their French language experience or they can continue developing their language proficiency, depending upon the level that was attained in elementary school. It could take students one or more school years to reach a particular language proficiency level, depending upon when the students start the program and how much time is given to French instruction in the school.

The program is organized into three language proficiency levels—Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced. Students in junior high school generally focus on the Beginning level. Each level has its own set of experiences. As students work through these experiences, they develop their ability to understand and communicate in French.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/FSL/whatsnew/FSL_handbook/ab_public.htm

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *French as a Second Language (FSL) Program: A Guide for Parents*. It is available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

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German Language and Culture

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/default.asp

This new three-year course sequence is designed to develop linguistic and cultural proficiency in German and a global perspective.

The following outcomes cover four areas of languages and culture development:

Applications

Students will use German in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes.

- to receive and impart information
- to express emotions and personal perspectives
- to get things done
- to form, maintain and change interpersonal relationships
- to extend their knowledge of the world
- for imaginative purposes and personal enjoyment

Language Competence

Students will understand and produce German effectively and competently in spoken and written forms.

- interpret and produce oral texts
- interpret and produce written texts, graphics and images
- attend to form
- apply knowledge of how discourse is organized, structured and sequenced in German
- apply knowledge of the sociocultural context

Global Citizenship

Students will acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be effective global citizens, through the exploration of the cultures of the German-speaking world.

- historical and contemporary elements of the cultures of German-speaking peoples
- affirming and valuing diversity
- personal and career opportunities

Strategies

Students will know and use various strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication.

- language learning
- language use
- general learning

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Italian Language and Culture

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/default.asp

This new three-year course sequence is designed to develop linguistic and cultural proficiency in Italian and a global perspective.

The following outcomes cover four areas of languages and culture development:

Applications

Students will use Italian in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes.

- to impart and receive information
- to express emotions and personal perspectives
- to get things done
- to form, maintain and change interpersonal relationships
- to extend their knowledge of the world
- for imaginative purposes and personal enjoyment

Language Competence

Students will use Italian effectively and competently.

- attend to form
- interpret and produce oral and written texts
- apply knowledge of the sociocultural context
- apply knowledge of how the Italian language is organized, structured and sequenced

Global Citizenship

Students will acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be effective global citizens, through the exploration of the cultures of the Italian-speaking world.

- historical and contemporary elements of Italian-speaking cultures
- affirming and valuing diversity
- personal and career opportunities

Strategies

Students will know and use strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication.

- language learning
- language use
- general learning

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Spanish Language and Culture

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/default.asp

This new three-year course sequence is designed to develop linguistic and cultural proficiency in Spanish and a global perspective.

The following outcomes cover four areas of languages and culture development:

Applications
Students will use Spanish in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes.

- to receive and impart information
- to express emotions and personal perspectives
- to get things done
- to form, maintain and change interpersonal relationships
- to extend their knowledge of the world
- for imaginative purposes and personal enjoyment

Language Competence
Students will use Spanish effectively and competently.

- attend to form
- interpret and produce texts
- apply knowledge of the sociocultural context
- apply knowledge of how text is organized, structured and sequenced in Spanish

Global Citizenship
Students will acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be effective global citizens, through the exploration of the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world.

- historical and contemporary elements of Spanish-speaking cultures
- affirming diversity
- personal and career opportunities

Strategies
Students will know and use strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication.

- language learning
- language use
- general learning

Ukrainian Language Arts

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/default.asp

This course is designed as the Ukrainian language learning component for students in the Ukrainian bilingual program.

Students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing. They learn to use Ukrainian confidently and competently in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and further learning. They are able to explore, understand and appreciate the Ukrainian culture for personal growth and satisfaction, and to participate in and contribute to an interdependent and multicultural global society.

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Ukrainian as a Second Language

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/

This program is designed for students who wish to learn to communicate with others in Ukrainian and to preserve Ukrainian language and culture. The program begins in Grade 7 and continues through to Grade 12.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Ukrainian as a Second Language Program of Studies.

- use appropriate social conventions
- ask information about another person, and relay that information
- carry out commands
- express actions in the negative
- ask and tell where people and objects are located, where one lives, simple directions
- ask and tell what one wants to do or needs to do
- count from 1 to 100; and recognize, orally, the ordinal numbers 1 to 10
- ask and tell the parts of the day, days of the week, seasons of the year

Other Languages

Many school boards have developed their own programs. Locally developed language programs include: Arabic, Chinese, Chipewyan, German, Hebrew, Italian and Polish. These locally developed courses are based on local needs and demands, and may not always be available.

For more information on second language instruction offered in your area, please contact your local school board.

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Optional Courses. *Students may select from:*					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

Environmental and Outdoor Education

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/others/eoed.pdf

In environmental and outdoor education, students develop interest and competence in outdoor studies and develop an understanding of their relationship to the environment. Environmental and outdoor education can be offered as a single course or as a sequence of courses, and includes:

- the basic knowledge, skills and attitudes required for safe and comfortable experiences
- awareness and appreciation of living things
- understanding of basic ecological processes
- skill, judgement, confidence and sensitivity in a range of environmentally responsible activities in outdoor settings
- lifestyle strategies that encourage responsibility for local and global environments.

Ethics

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/others/jhethics.pdf

The ethics course is designed to help students become contributing, ethical and mature persons, and may be offered in Grade 7, Grade 8 or Grade 9. The aim of the course is to help students become more thoughtful, to think of the interests of others, and to see ethical implications in their daily lives. The ethics course includes:

- working definitions of ethics and values
- decision-making skills
- historical values and traditions
- values of different cultural groups
- responsibility to community.

Locally Developed Courses

School boards may develop and/or acquire courses that are innovative and responsive to local and individual needs. Contact your local school board to get information about locally developed courses available in your jurisdiction.

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Personal and Career Development

Preparing for life and work is a complex process that begins in the early years of schooling and continues throughout our lives. Alberta schools are taking an active role—along with parents and the community—in helping students move successfully from basic education to further studies and the workplace.

In junior high school, students begin linking their personal aptitudes and goals to possible future careers. They continue to develop life skills, including such employability skills as cooperating with others and being reliable. At this stage, students begin to outline their own learning and career goals.

Personal and career development activities and outcomes are integrated into all junior high school courses and programs. The following junior high school programs focus specifically on these topics: Health and Life Skills, Physical Education, Career and Technology Studies (CTS) and work study.

Many junior high schools organize special career development activities, such as mentoring, job shadowing, portfolios and annual career fairs. Junior high schools encourage students to develop a career plan. Plans should be updated annually and signed by parents and principals. Students typically develop a personal portfolio, including a résumé, and may use a career planner such as the *Middle/Junior High School Student Learning–Career Planner* developed by Alberta Learning.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/cardir_jr.pdf
[pdf version]

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/JHPlan.doc
[word version]

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/cardir.pdf

The *Student Learning–Career Planner Information Booklet* and the *Middle/Junior High School Student Learning–Career Planner* are useful tools for Alberta's secondary school teachers and guidance counsellors as they work with students, parents and other key partners to help students move through the career planning process. The information booklet and junior high school planner are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

Planning for Senior High School

During their junior high years, students make decisions about their senior high school program. It helps to keep in mind that:

- strengths, interests and realistic career paths play a major role in decision making
- specific courses are required for an Alberta High School Diploma or Certificate of Achievement
- knowledge of course sequences is important, because many courses require prerequisites.

Guidance from the school and classroom teacher is available. Planning for senior high school is more effective when students and parents are familiar with requirements and work closely with teachers.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/math/whatsnew/intro.asp
http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/parents/handbooks/
View *A Credit to Yourself: Planning Your Senior High School Diploma Program*, May 2003 at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/other.asp

Alberta Learning provides information on planning for senior high school through a variety of resources, including the following:

- *Senior High School Mathematics Programs: Revised Handbook for Parents and Students*
- *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents: Senior High School*
- *A Credit to Yourself: Planning Your Senior High School Diploma Program*, May 2003

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Feedback Form

Curriculum Handbook for Parents 2004–2005: Grade 8

Please indicate whether you are a:

☐ Parent ☐ Teacher ☐ School Administrator ☐ District Administrator ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Please indicate whether you used:

☐ a print copy ☐ the online format ☐ both

Please respond to the following by placing a check mark under **Strongly Disagree**, **Disagree**, **Agree** or **Strongly Agree**.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The handbook provides useful information.				
2. The amount of information is appropriate.				
3. The reading level is appropriate.				
4. The layout and organization are user-friendly.				
5. The links to the Alberta Learning Web site are helpful.				
6. Downloading and printing is easy.				

How can this handbook be made more helpful to parents?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your feedback.

Please send your response to:

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